(iv) Ministry has prepared a National Forestry Action Plan to enhance the contribution of forestry and tree resources for ecological stability and people centered development through increased investments for conservation and development of forest resources.

(v) National guidelines for prevention and control of forest fire have been issued to all States/UTs.

Poaching in Chilka Lake

327. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a)whether Government are aware of the large scale killing of birds by poachers around Chilka Lake in Orissa;

(b) if so, the number of poachers apprehended during the last three years near the lake, year-wise; and

(c) the fresh steps taken/proposed by Government to wean away poachers from killing of birds around Chilka lake?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Instances of poaching of birds around Chilka Lake in Orissa have been reported from time to time.

(b) Number of poachers apprehended during the last three years (*i.e.* 1999-2000 to 2001-2002) is given below:—

Year	Number of poachers apprehended
1999-2000	7
2000-01	6
2001-02	11

(c) Steps taken by the State Government to wean away the poachers from killing of birds around Chilka Lake with active support from Chilka Development Authrotiy, NGOs and local wildlife lovers are as follows:

(i) 22 birds protection Committees have been formed invillages around Chilka Lake to assist Forest Department in protection and reservation of birds.

(ii) 56 potential poachers of Soren village were motivated by department and other agencies, not to resort to birds poaching.

(iii) 45 persons of the above have been provided with assistance for adopting other source of livelihood by arranging soft term bank loan of Rs. 5,000/- each as an interest of 4 per cent through Allahabad Bank.

(iv) 3 Eco-development Committees have been also formed and are functioning in adjoining villages to divert the villagers not to resort for bird poaching for livelihood and provided alternate assistance.

(v) Mobile party of Chilka Wildlife Division is engaged in patrolling during the migratory season. VHF net working and patrolling by boats have been provided to collect the information of poaching and apprehend active poachers immediately.

(vi) Chilka Development Authority has started awarding "PAKHI BANDHU" (Friends of Birds) to villagers/Non Governemntal Organisations to encourage community participation in protection of birds in Chilka.

(vii) Wildlife Wing has initiated awarding Best performing Birds protection committee during Wildlife Week to start with Hon'bleChief Minister has awarded prizes to two best Birds Protection Committee during Wildlife Week Celebration of 2001.

(viii) Systematic awareness programme has also been launched in collaboration with Non Governmental Organisations in and around the Chilka Lake to give protection to the birds in the lake. Efforts have been taken to engage watchers from such peripheral villages organising protection committee and to remunerate volunteers through the village committee and to convert such habitual poachers to Birds Conservationist.